THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR): (a) and (b) The viability of some mini-steel plants in the country during the last few years has been somewhat poor due to their technological obsolescence. Mini-Steel Plants have also represented regarding shortage of power and high prices of inputs.

(c) In order to enable the units to become technologically efficient and more viable, Government have decided to allow expansion of mini steel plants which undertake modernisation. Government have also reduced the custom duty on imported scrap by 5 per cent *ad valorem* with effect from 4th December, 86.

Impact of Import of Seeds on Domestic Production of Quality Seeds

320. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to allow import of large quantities of seeds under OGL;

(b) if so, the reasons for allowing such imports;

(c) whether the imports would affect domestic production of quality seeds; and

(d) whether the imported seeds are likely to suit our environmental conditions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHYAM LAL YADAV): (a) No, Sir. However, the import of only seeds of vegetables/flowers and ornamental plants, tubes and bulbs, cutting saplings, budwoods, etc. of flowers will be allowed on OGL by identified categories.

(b) the reason behind allowing such imports are to increase vegetable production and productivity, to ensure the increased availability of vegetables on reasonable prices to the consumers, to increase exports and to generate higher income to the farmers.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Yes, Sir.

Lock-out in Industrial Units

321. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of industrial units which have declared lock-outs during the last three years since January, 1985; and

(b) what steps have been taken by Government to reopen these factories?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI BINDESHWARI DUBEY): (a) According to latest available information, the number of units which declared lock-outs was 400 in 1985, 434 in 1986 and 451 in 1987.

(b) The Government have been maintaining a close and continuous watch on the industrial relations situation in the country. Industrial Relation Machinery both at the Centre and in the States are taking steps to reduce the incidence of lock-outs through prevenitve mediation and conciliation. Penalities for illegal lock-outs are proposed to be made more stringent in the amendments proposed to the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

Telecast of Ballets on Social Themes

322. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cultural organisations have approached Government for telecast of bellets on social themes, including dowry